

# Fellowship stories

**Several of the interviewees in this edition of the TFU mention the ITTO Fellowship Programme as one of ITTO's most significant capacity-building activities. Here we hear from some ITTO Fellowship alumni**

## **Daniela Pauletto (Brazil), aged 34, Assistant Professor at Universidade Federal do Oeste do Pará**

In 2008, Ms Pauletto participated in an international course on diversified tropical forest management in Costa Rica:

“The ITTO Fellowship allowed me to access top-range academic training. During my participation in the course, I became interested in payments for environmental services (PES) schemes and model forests. I recently participated in a selection process for a university post, and one of my strengths was my knowledge of PES schemes, climate change and forest management gained through the Fellowship. A great benefit of having participated in this type of course was the development of a network of professional contacts, to which I still have access today. I rate the ITTO Fellowship to be extremely useful because it enables researchers and students to participate in courses that national institutions are unable to support.”



**In the field:** Daniela Pauletto marks out a temporary survey plot in natural tropical forest. Photo: D. Pauletto

## **San Win (Myanmar), aged 54, Pro Rector, Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry**

Dr San Win, who received ITTO Fellowships in 2003 and 2008, studied the shifting cultivation practices of hill tribes in Myanmar:

“Through the ITTO Fellowships I documented the shifting cultivation practices of various hill tribes, and some are truly sustainable for soil while reducing impact on the remaining natural forests. A clear example of this is the Danu tribe's fallow land management. The Danu uses wild sunflowers (*Tithonia diversifolia*) as fallow species. Their management style is that they cut twice a year on abandoned land; this adds biomass to the soil because wild sunflower, a herb species, decomposes easily. Two years after practising such management, the Danu crop the same area again. They need only a few plots to maintain their livelihoods while conserving soil fertility and maintaining the remaining natural forests. The ITTO Fellowship Programme enhances the capacities of foresters in their research and understanding of forestry and related fields in Myanmar. Forestry is one of the major economic sectors in Myanmar and sustaining forestry management surely enables sustainable development in the country.”



**Shift work:** San Win speaks with a local farmer in a shifting cultivation field during a field visit to document shifting cultivation practices in northern Myanmar. Photo: S. Win

## **Paul Bosu (Ghana), aged 47, senior research scientist at the Forest Research Institute of Ghana**

Dr Bosu received two fellowships, one in 1993 to carry out Masters research and another in 2009 to attend a short training course on environmental leadership and communication:

“The Fellowship enabled me to visit experts and laboratories in the USA to complete my Masters. Through that I was able to identify natural enemies of a certain tree pest, develop protocols for handling and managing the pest in the field, and improve my skills in forest health management. As a result I had the opportunity to undertake a PhD in forest entomology. Since returning to Ghana, I have applied my skills in supporting Ghana's forest plantation development efforts. I believe my research and promotional activities have contributed substantially to the development of mixed-species plantations in Ghana. In addition, the course on environmental leadership helped me make a meaningful contribution to the development of butterfly-based ecotourism in Ghana, which my organization has been implementing, and it also helped me engage with children in Ghana in tree-planting and environmental conservation. Without the Fellowship it might have been impossible for me to acquire these skills.”



**Mixed results:** Paul Bosu explains a mixed-species plantation experiment in Ghana. Photo: P. Bosu



**Community work:** Sandra Rodriguez (pointing) meets a community as part of her research on the human dimensions of forest management. Photo: S. Rodriguez

**Sandra Rodriguez (Colombia), aged 43, associate professor, Universidad Autónoma de Chihuahua, Mexico**

In 2001 Dr Rodriguez undertook a Masters programme in forest resources and conducted research on markets for timber products on Colombia's South Pacific coast:

"The ITTO Fellowship has had an indelible positive impact on my career. Thanks to the Fellowship I completed my Masters in forest resources with satisfaction, which in turn opened the door to my PhD in forest management. It has also helped extend my knowledge in different settings and countries. Currently, I am working on applied field research projects in Mexico and Colombia and I have produced a scientific publication on the human dimensions of forest management. In 2008 I was selected as an International Tropical Timber Market Expert endorsed by ITTO, and I received an Outstanding Environmental Science Program Research Award from Oklahoma State University in 2009 and an Outstanding Doctoral Research Award from IUFRO in 2014. My research on the human dimensions of forest management will help in the design of policies that are consistent with people's values and cultures, and it is helping professionals to understand social dynamics in forests, which is important in achieving SFM."

**Christine Fletcher (Malaysia), aged 38, senior research officer at the Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM)**

Dr Fletcher undertook an environmental leadership course at the Smithsonian Institute, USA, in 2005:

"The course presented to me a myriad of techniques on management and leadership, guided me through a self-discovery of my innate leadership skills, and helped me further develop and express them in words and action. The course also gave me renewed motivation, clearer goals and a sense of purpose to excel in my career. The skills learned and experience garnered during the short course helped me tremendously with my confidence and prepared me to take up a bigger leadership role at my organization. I am now the Head of the Forest Ecology Branch and Principle Coordinator of the Pasoh FRIM Research Station. I have also been invited to participate in international meetings and national policymaking processes such as on forestry practices, certification and climate change.



**Teamwork:** Christine Fletcher (foreground) with the field team responsible for developing and testing the rapid biodiversity assessment guide. Photo: C. Fletcher

I have been involved in two SFM-related projects funded by ITTO. One of these, which concluded last year, enabled my team to produce a manual for rapid biodiversity assessment in Malaysian production forests. The Malaysian Forestry Department and ITTO have shown support for the manual, and the Cabinet is currently reviewing it for implementation at the national level."

**Brice Nganda (Gabon), aged 42, coordinator of the Forest Programme at the WWF Central Regional Programme Office and manager of the Global Forest Trade Network**

Mr Nganda undertook a Masters programme in integrated land development and management with several institutions in France in 2010:

"The Fellowship helped me advance my career. Before the Fellowship I was an undergraduate with only a three-year college training, and on completing the Fellowship I had a Masters degree. This graduation directly resulted in a promotion in my professional career in the Gabonese public service. Furthermore, I've been trained in the use of professional tools such as capacity building in environmental management and integrated land management and development. There was also the sharing of professional and cultural experiences with other persons hailing from all four continents. Prior to the Fellowship I was the manager of a forest community project with CARPO [the regional WWF Office]. After the Fellowship, I was able to apply for the position of coordinator for the entire WWF-Gabon Forest Programme. Thanks to the skills I have acquired, I'm now the co-manager of the ATO/ ITTO Principles, Criteria and Indicators [PCI] project currently under implementation, which is to adapt the PCI to each country involved."



**Heading out:** Brice Nganda travels to a forest concession on a forest audit mission as part of an ITTO project. Photo: B. Nganda